



RESEARCH PAPER

**A Stylistic Analysis of Figures of Speech in Tariq Rehman's *Bingo*
from *The Legacy and Other Short Stories***

Abdul Rauf alias Wazir Ali Shah

BS Scholar, Department of English Language and Literature, The Shaikh Ayaz University
Shikarpur, Sindh, Pakistan, <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8502-1690>

***Corresponding Author**

syedabdulraufalishah110@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyze the role of the figures of speech by performing a stylistic analysis of Tariq Rehman's short story *Bingo* from the collection *The Legacy and Other Short Stories*. This analysis is qualitative in nature and utilizes content analysis approach hence the result involves identifying the figures of speech used such as metaphors, similes, personification, and hyperbole among others. The author notes that Rehman succeeds in the use of figures of speech to draw attention to the psychology of characters, help in strengthening the aspects of loss and nostalgia in the themes, as well as adding to the overall vividness of the novel's descriptions. Further research on how cultural context influence the use of the rhetorical modes that appear in Rehman's writing can be conducted and comparison between Rehman's work and other writers in South Asian region can also be done.

KEYWORDS

Short Fiction, Stylistic Analysis, Tariq Rehman

Introduction

Language is seen as an ideal medium for exchanging information (Harper, 2013) containing complex combinations of sounds, and the representation of those sounds is known as writing, either performed on paper or classically engraved on stones, wood, and different hard materials. Since the evolution of applied linguistics, one of its branch stylistics has taken a huge contemplation of different professionals, teachers, critics, and more. The explanatory power of stylistics can help us understand in more depth how the style of texts can influence the perceptions of readers in more everyday situations. (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010). Hence, stylistics can assist different individuals in understanding and discerning the different types of distinctive writings of a certain writer, philosopher or critic. The positive aspects can be acquired while the negative ones remain a lesson not to be repeated again. So, stylistic analysis of *Bingo: A short story* by Tariq Rehman about the Pakistani military in 1971 is the central concern of this study.

Style

The style is known as a particular method of linguistic expression in a text used by the author to convey the information to the reader in a translucent manner allowing author to engrave his fingerprint to the piece of writing, "Style is understood within this area of study of study as *the selection certain linguistic forms or features over the other possible ones* For Example what makes writing of a particular author distinct itself." (Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998) An author can be known for the use of certain linguistic device or technique in his poetry or prose as Samuel Taylor Coleridge is known for use of long conversational

poems despite certain authors engraving fingerprints over their works through unique ways of explaining Periods do influence and distinguish a works from others.

When the study of style is conducted in linguistics, it relates to the field of stylistics closely "the capacity to convey information about other characteristics of the speaker" (Chatman, 1966) we can say that style does evolve and change according to the character, place, timing and role.

Stylistics

A branch of linguistics which studies the characteristics of situationally-distinctive uses of language with particular reference to literary language and tries to establish principles capable of accounting for the particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language. (Bullock et al., 1988). The origins of stylistics go back to the poetics and especially to the rhetoric of the ancient classical world. (Burke, 2017). Since the era of ancient Greek, It was believed that words carry power to influence and induce a state of emotions in the listeners or readers (Aristotle, 2008, 363) and new research proves it too. "Previous studies have shown that mere words, particularly affective words, can dampen emotional responses." (Tabibnia et al., 2008). Thus, the field of stylistics becomes a steel pillar for modern sciences to understand not only literary texts but human communication, psychology, linguistics and marketing terms too, providing a wide platform to conduct and perform research.

It has linked different disciplines of education together in the most productive terms enabling us to understand the different subjects in more interconnected terms. According to Simpsons Stylistics is the study of linguistic style, where style refers to the choices which particular speakers or writers make in language to create a specific effect. Stylistics can be applied to all forms of writing and speech, in any medium, and can be persuasive in nature, employing rhetorical devices and strategies to influence the reader or listener. (Simpson, 2004)

We can say that the central purpose of stylistics is the exploration of linguistic style and techniques in language that makes a piece of text or collection of words distinct from others. Words that carry persuasive techniques such as rhetorical devices to sway the audience. Making a text persuasive, emotional, threatening or business generating manifesto, it provides reasonable evidence in the text that can help us deepen our understanding of effective and ineffective text.

Literature Review

Literature review provides useful insights to the pre-existing knowledge and research already done regarding the topic by multiple scholars. In this notion, stylistic analysis and figures of speech are the topic of discussion.

A stylistic analysis was conducted by a group of researchers (Latif, 2020) of forty rules of love written by Elif Shafak. Novel contained four different parts; only one of them was covered in this study called Earth. They studied the elements of speech that were used by Turkish writer to convey hidden and deliberate meaning to the audience. The novel was analysed stylistically and grammatically. Author maintained a check of figures of speech that include simile, metaphor, anaphora, alliteration, oxymoron, and onomatopoeia. Study proved that the author used simile and metaphor together to compare two distinct ideas in an expertious way providing readers an attractive view of the plot, he further added anaphora to direct the attention of the audience to a specific effect of remembrance and

persuasion. He also used the oxymoron in the first part to make the readers think deeply about the topic following the onomatopoeic sounds.

Similarly, another study was conducted (Baroudi, 2021) of the Honest Deception: The Case of Seinfeld TV Series Sitcom, He conducted a stylistic analysis by mentioning honest deception as a choice of words to imply something different from literal meaning. The author conducted the study on the aspects of hyperboles, litotes, irony and sarcasm. The study was conducted through the method of textual Conceptual Functions the author concludes with the notion that certain devices play crucial role in adding depth to characters and storyline together all of these devices provide a unique charm, wit and appeal to the series. The research highlights the importance of stylistic analysis for a clear understanding of language complexities present in popular culture.

A researcher conducted a study (Shaker, 2020) over the short story *The Little Match Girl* by Danish poet and author Hans Christian Anderson. The study explores the four language levels that include; Phonological, Syntactic, Graphological, Semantic, In addition to four language levels the author also analysed three dominant figures of speech; Personification, Simile and Hyperbole. The researchers characterise the language of the author by variation and uniqueness present in the poetic and narrative style of the author.

Another team of researchers (Ramzan et al., 2021) conducted a study over the short story *Call it a Sunshine* by Hamid Khan, they examined stylistic tools that include Lexical, Grammatical and Phonological schemes. One of the purposes of the research was to unveil the dexterity and decorum of the local writers to attract the attention of researchers and appreciate local authors as they depict social issues and society. The whole story contained declarative sentences with some essence of negation present in a few sentences, the third person narrative was dominant in the narrative including abundant use of sound devices to carry out the meaning and to highlight societal issues and complications.

The study of poem *The Onset* by Robert Frost was performed by a team of researching candidates (Khan et al., 2014) aiming to uncover the stylistic features of the poem that contained multi layered meanings. Factors like; Diction, Imagery and sound devices were taken under the cognition serving the main idea of facilitating the comprehension of key themes that include; conflict between good and evil, pessimism, optimism and the life and death. They favoured the use of stylistic analysis to explore different poetic devices and vocabulary items to uncover the secret behind poets' simple words and deep philosophy explained inside the poem.

Another research was conducted (Sarfaraz, 2022) on the novel *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, the researcher used a secondary source of data collection that covered the analysis of lexical categories and grammatical categories only from the linguistic and stylistic features proposed by Leech and Short. The study proved that Coelho used simple words for building interest and swaying the audience including use of various literary devices throughout the novel that include; foreshadowing, irony, personification, symbolism, motifs, metaphors, and symbols to carry out the effect of persuasion to the readers.

The study also proved the heavy use of abstract nouns that the author used to represent his complex ideas in a simpler way to the audience followed by verbs then adjectives. The use of determiners remained low in the novel followed by auxiliaries then preposition and pronouns. The researcher concluded the research with the compliments to the philosophical and lexical diversity present in the style of Coelho's writing.

Material and Methods

In this study the checklist of heuristic and linguistic categories presented by (Leech & Short, 2007) is used for the analysis. The study is based on a qualitative approach that includes reading and interpretation of the short story *Bingo*. The research looks deep at the ideas and techniques used by the author to enhance the story.

Sample/Content

The text of short story *Bingo* by *Tariq Rehman* is the sample and the primary source for this study.

Method

The research uses stylistic analysis as the method of the study. Figures of speech simile, metaphor, anaphora, alliteration, oxymoron, and onomatopoeia are explored, the method is chosen because it provides a deeper interpretation to the literary text, The short story *Bingo* is chosen from the collection of short stories *the legacy and other short stories* by *Tariq Rehman* because it holds a historical and political background throughout the narration many factors have hidden meanings that need an eye of consideration.

Data Analysis

Simile

When two different things are compared using the words 'like' or 'as' it is called a simile. A literary device used to create a vivid imagery, highlighting a quality or describing similarity between two compared objects. As in selected lines below author has tried to visualize a specific concept, below are the text from the narration containing such expressions.

"He made me hop around catching my ankles till I fell down and my legs ached like hell."

"He let the cadets get late and stood like a statue who has had its behind kicked."

"The bearer goggled like a fish"

"like a baby not like a grown-up man"

"Maqsood ragged him a great deal for grinning like an ape"

"Tajassur kept sitting like a stooge throughout the conference."

"The bastards cried for pity and whimpered like dogs"

"The scene was rather like some Second World War movie film's"

"brown-skinned people ran out like chickens with the heads cut off."

"They looked like animals."

"You are colonists, like the French in Algeria and the Belgians in the Congo."

"My heart was beating like mad"

"The thought came and struck me like a blow in boxing"

"It was bursting in me like a tidal wave"

"We stole out like shadows"

"a woman with soft eyes like Tajassur's gave me food."

"Tajassur leapt up like lightning."

"I shouted like a madman."

"his guts had come out and sprawled on his thighs like snakes"

"the colonel was as serious as church"

"as sensible as the British"

In the text extracts above the author has performed a direct comparison of two distinct concepts to convey a particular thought more discreetly and vividly.

Metaphor

When two things are compared without using “like” or “as” it is called a metaphor, It directly mentions or refers to one thing by narrating another that creating a more impactful and imaginative description in the narrative.

“Up to our neck in the soup”

“Roast the traitors”

“Eyes filled with ravenous hunger”

“Walls closed upon me”

“The soft skin of the girls was no more”

“Heart beating like mad”

The above lines provide a metaphorical expression directly in the text and create the essence of hidden meaning throughout the story with indirect comparison and showcasing by commonalities of creating a rhetorical effect.

Anaphora

When a certain collection of words or certain sentences are repeated throughout the narrative it creates a sense of persuasion and emphasis called Anaphora a rhetoric device used in the writing, speaking and many more fields of public interactions. In the narration the author has used “We” and “They” as an anaphora to create a sense of division between two individuals eliciting in the reader the sense of empathy, division and relatability with individual supporting their perspective.

It was miserable in the first term at the Pakistan Military Academy. It was. They made us stand in the snow in underwears...“Yes, Yes, that is wonderful,” replied the C.O. “Though they are short-statured people. They don’t seem to be a martial race.”...“Why? What the hell do your mean why. Because they are Pakistan’s enemies. Because they want to divide our country. Because they are Indian agents and anti-Pakistan. That’s what we are being paid for.

We were supposed to have walked back 20 miles and there was a competition with the other paltoons. And yet this grinning baby brought us back on this truck. Natually we reached before midnight...Well, we reached the Academy gates and were told that we were third...The C.O. talked to the senior officers and we kept listening. Nobody addressed us again. Then the supper was announced and we moved to the table. The C.O. began talking about history...We stole out like shadows. The Bangali soldiers saluted him. He wore a Captain’s rank and the same uniform I had seen on the Major. There was a jeep outside and in it we sped away from that loathsome house. We didn’t talk.

In the above extracts of the short story the writer added certain words to highlight a particular emotion, character and narrative in the story to show emphasis in the notion.

The author has tried to emphasise over a topic using the same words at the start of different lines to convey and highlight a particular text and characteristics in the short story.

Alliteration

When the same consonant is repeated in the beginning of the connected words it creates a sense of rhythm, emphasis a particular text and make it easy to remember for the audience such rhetoric technique is called alliteration. Author has used this technique in many occurrences throughout the text sections of such occurrences are listed below.

"stand in the snow"
 "Cadet corporal" chatted
 "room to room"
 "He read his lesson half an hour before"
 "Shibe Nawaz Khan," Sher got red in the face"
 "Safer to you sir," Son of a loony"
 "forced to fight"
 "sat down and started"
 "with my watch"
 "You will be tried" You killed innocent civilians"
 "would have withdrawn gracefully"
 "Safer, Safer" came a low soft voice"
 "was a warmth in their house which
 "made me melt"
 "What was surrender? It was all meaningless"
 "Her husband had"
 "Bloody Bingos,"
 "commented the Captain"

The repetition of same consonant is carried throughout the text to show alliterated patterns in the short story and by using technique of alliteration the writer has depicted the different type of mindset in the narration.

Oxymoron

When two distinct, contradictory and opposing ideas are combined and presented in the narration such technique is called oxymoron author has used this technique in the text on many occasions and the extracts of such expressions form the text are listed below.

Deafening silence
 Soft eyes like Tajassur's
 Languorous peace
 Lovely smile
 Ruthless optimist
 cowardly hero
 controlled chaos
 earsplitting whisper
 joyful defeat
 Calm disaster

Different ideas are put together by the author to induce an effect of confusion using techniques of oxymoron in the short story.

Onomatopoeia

When a word imitates the natural sound that it represents it is called onomatopoeia and the extracts of such expressions from the text are listed below.

Clattered
Hissed
Clapped
Crunched
Fizzed
Shouted
Blazed
Whistled
Swooshed
Yanked
Jeered
Knocked
Bursting
Rocked

The author carried the use of onomatopoeic expressions over the different segments in the story to produce an instant sound effect for a situation.

Conclusion

The author has used different types of figures of speech in the narration while having a particular historic and cultural background in mind to present his own ideas over the events that already took place in the past. The writer has assembled two distinct ideas proficiently, with the use of simile and metaphor of common language and the vernacular words and refraining from the use of technical and jargoned vocabulary this resulted in a maleficent effect of persuasion in the text and kept the reader engaged and hooked throughout the story this effect further get enhanced with the use of anaphora that was used by the author to highlight a specific character and behaviour towards that character this device triggered the feelings of the audience and persuaded them so they can relate to an incident and keep their mind hooked toward event regarding only that specific character of the story. Further in the story the writer took the help of oxymoron to add an essence of complexity in the narrative to provoke and confuse the reader making the audience ponder over the information and the ideas that the author presented and the lasting effect can be attained. The writer carried on using onomatopoeic sounds to add more to the preexisting effect of persuasion these words further deepened the impact so the audience can remember an occurred event in the narration not by the words but sound as well. Through this analysis of the figure of speech in the short story, it gets proved that the author has added distinct techniques in his writings to convey the message to the audience effectively that makes the text compelling and separates it from the language used in everyday life.

Recommendations

The use of literary devices by authors from all over the world is not new in their writings. However, this study is conducted over a specific story from the collection of short stories written by *Tariq Rehman* (Rahman, 1990) over some incidents of history. Further, this study exhibits the diversity present in the works of local writer and encourages the researchers to conduct further analysis over local writer too. Moreover, the study can be

helpful for the students and linguists that want to carry out stylistic analysis of the literary text(s).

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